

KidwiseSM

When it comes to youth sports...

**Don't Be a
LOUD-
MOUTH!**

**Yell only
positive
comments.**



**Let the
coach be
in charge.**

**Be available
and
encouraging.**



**Prevent Child Abuse,
Virginia**
1-800-CHILDREN

Loudmouthed Parents Will Embarrass Everybody

How often have you heard parents yell comments like this?

"Don't just stand there! Watch what you're doing!"

"You'll have to try a lot harder than that if you want to win!"

"What's the matter with you? You're letting the other team walk all over you!"

Why do some parents feel that they have to yell, scream and otherwise humiliate their children in front of everyone? Unfortunately, the outburst may have the unwanted consequence of focusing the attention where the parent should least want it to be — on the child's mistake. Onlookers may also be horrified at the parent's insensitivity, and the child is certainly humiliated by the vicious tirade.

According to Rick Wolff, author of *Good Sports, The Concerned Parent's Guide to Competitive Youth Sports*, parents put so much of themselves into their child's sports

performances that when the youngster makes a mistake they feel obliged to blurt out a criticism so others will understand that they know the play should have been made. It's as though the Mom or Dad is "apologizing" for the youngster's actions.

Parents also interfere by shouting out directions that are contrary to the coach's wishes. You can imagine the confusion a young player feels when Dad is yelling "Go! Go!" and the coach is yelling "Stay! Stay!" The child has no idea what to do or whom to please.

Children get involved in organized sports to have fun, but according to Stephen J. Bavolek, Ph.D. of the National Institute for Child Centered Coaching, 72% of all children enrolled in organized sports between the ages of 8 — 13 years drop out. Parents can help children enjoy sports by giving them support and encouragement rather than belittling them and their efforts.

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For more information, call

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